UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Rob MacDonald Chamber Concert

Curated by Norbert Palej

2025 University of Toronto New Music Festival
Reza Vali, Roger D. Moore Distinguished Visitor in Composition
Norbert Palej, *festival coordinator*

Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 7:30pm | Walter Hall, 80 Queen's Park

PROGRAM

Mythos (2023)

Andrew Staniland (b. 1977)

Preludium - *Begin (Again)*
Allemande - *Lachenmann / Schoenberg / Bach*
Chorale - *Es gibt wahrscheinlich keinen Gott, aber die Welt ist trotzdem schön*
Sarabande - *Vampires*
Intermezzo - *Ghosts*
Passacaille - *what you see is all there is*

fibril & thread (2024)–world premiere

Christina Volpini (b. 1992)

I. *fibril*
II. *thread*

Calligraphy No. 5–Canadian premiere

Reza Vali

Absolution (2024)–world premiere

Erik Ross (b. 1972)

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures. Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

PROGRAM NOTES

Mythos, Andrew Staniland
Mythos is a suite of 6 movements for solo guitar. The piece is influenced by the Bach Lute suites and modelled after a baroque suite, however the relationships to the traditional suite are distant, and sometimes in name only. The work is not as much a variation on the lute suites as it is a new work visited by the ghosts of the past, translated through traditional and AI inspired compositional approaches.

***fibril & thread*, Christina Volpini**
fibril & thread was written for Rob MacDonald. Fibres of varied shades are woven to pattern this work. Through this spinning, drawing out in a long line, wavers, falters, and quivers sound and colour the fabric.

Thank you to Rob for inviting me to create this work, and for bringing the care and attention of one threading a needle.

Calligraphy No. 5, Reza Vali
The musical material of *Calligraphy No. 5* is derived from Persian traditional music. The modal characteristics of the piece as well as the tuning, rhythm, and form, relate to the Iranian modal system, the *Dástgâh*. The pitch structure of the composition is based on the Persian *Dástgâh* of *Návâ.*

Návâ (pronounced nahVoh) is one of the oldest modes of the Persian modal system. The scale of Návâ which I have used for the piece is: D-Ep-F-G-A-Bb-C-D. The 'Ep' means that the pitch is a quarter-tone higher than E-flat. The mode consists of two interlocked tetrachords with the pitch G as the Finalis (the tonic). The descending order is: G-F-Ep-D, and the ascending series is: G-A-Bb-C. The two tetrachords are elaborated throughout the piece undergoing series of permutations and expansions.

Absolution, Erik Ross
Absolution is, in essence, a journey piece about driving through adversity. It is about negotiating through severely contrasting elements of beauty, loss, betrayal, and the anger and perseverance that power us through towards self-preservation…..the conflict we choose to engage in order to become a free individual with ourselves intact.

This piece is dedicated to guitarist Rob MacDonald. My most heartfelt gratitude goes out to him for his devotion to his craft and his grand friendship.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Rob MacDonald, guitar
While he plays the most ubiquitous instrument in the world, guitarist Rob MacDonald digs incessantly to find some of its least known repertoire. This focus comes from a keen interest in working with composers who risk taking things too far – and occasionally offer listeners a glimpse into new worlds of sound. He plays in ChromaDuo and teaches at the University of Toronto.